



LAPS

Gerrit Rietveld Academie

www.laps-rietveld.nl

[PDF](#)

PolakVanBekkum

Kenniskring / Knowledge Network: PolakVanBekkum

The city is an unstable entity, a fluid mass-produced by humans and objects in the act of moving.

Our research [The City as Performative Object](#) is based on our hypothesis that the city is created by move-act of the individual. Drawing from Judith Butler's thinking around gender, performativity and speech act we approach mobility as a performative force, continuously writing, rewriting and overwriting the city's architecture, identity, planning and intentions. We will explore the city's unstable existence, its ongoing presence as a *performative object*.

In other words: In the same way, as Butler approaches gender as an unstable aspect of one's identity that is continuously produced by several performative acts that can be studied, we intend to approach the city, and especially its architecture, as an unstable construction, that is produced by what we call, *Move-Acts*.

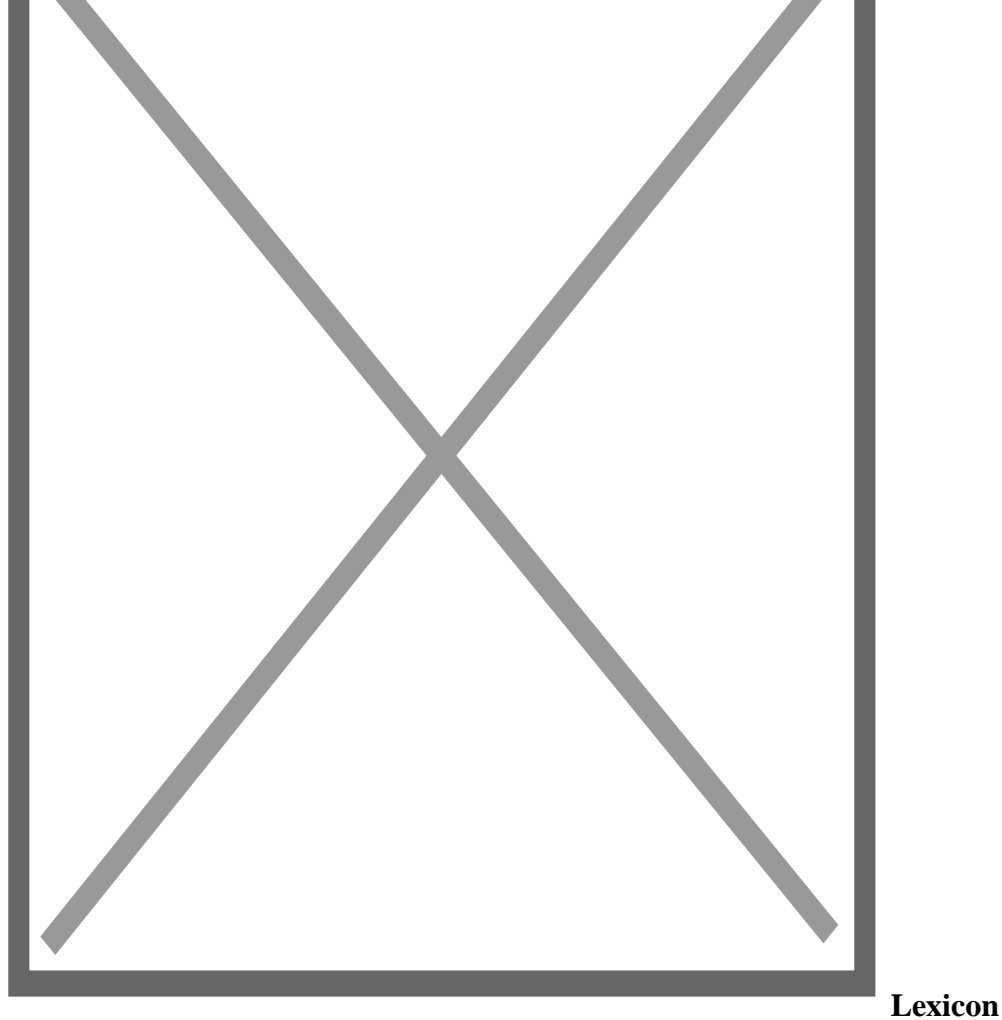
Research component: Theory

Is it possible to unveil the city as constructed in a performative manner and to contemplate the order, where mobility precedes stones, asphalt, and buildings? Do the physical, day-to-day acts of moving play a role? Is the city produced by stylized acts of mobility? Is the stable existence of cities an illusion?

Methods

In her texts, she clearly uses core concepts that can be considered as tools, as appropriation stepping stones. As a thought experiment, I translate those fundamental concepts to the realm of mobility and space.

This quest results in a lexicon, a set of translations.



The following lexical items come into play for this experiment:

- 1 Individual translates to Move-Entity
- 2 Gender-Act translates to Move-Act
- 3 The two sexes, the Gender-Categories translate to several Move-Categories
- 4 Gender-Drag translates into Move-Drag

Essay

Our research has resulted in several essays, lectures, and columns, both in English and Dutch. Links and more information can be found [here](#).

Research component: Practice Based

We have developed a series of workshops based on theory and practice-based experiments. The core of the workshop's consists of testing the lexicon "in the wild": both in public space as on cinematographic examples. The lockdowns of 2020 have been used as extraordinary stages of performative city space explorations. Links to the workshops can be found [here](#)

.

Research effluence: Go Move Be

We have realised a short data-film in collaboration with CBK Zuidoost: [Go Move Be](#). The film premiered in 2018 at the [Netherlands Film Festival](#) in Utrecht. The realisation of the film was not part of the research, but was be informed by the research.

Related posts:

1. [Quincy Gario](#)
2. [PJ Roggeband](#)
3. [Oene Dijk](#)
4. [Jan Robert Leegte](#)